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Curriculum Handbook *for* **Parents**

1998–1999

Catholic School Version

GRADE 6 SIX

Alberta EDUCATION

ALBERTA EDUCATION CATALOGUING IN PUBLICATION DATA

Alberta. Alberta Education.
Curriculum handbook for parents 1998–1999 : Catholic school version : grade 6.

URL: http://ednet.edc.gov.ab.ca
ISBN 0–7732–9907–6

1. Education—Alberta—Curricula—Handbooks, manuals, etc.
I. Title.

LB1564.C2.A333 1998 375.37

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Curriculum Handbook *for* **Parents**

1998–1999

Catholic School Version

GRADE **6**

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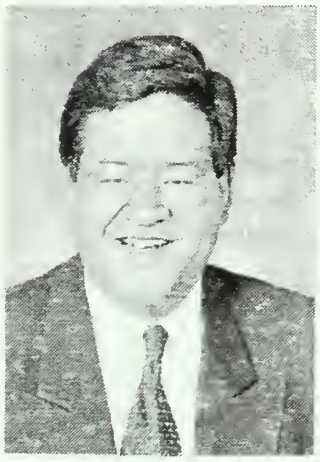
Message from the
Minister of Education



While students are at the centre of the education system, you, as parents are a vital partner. Your involvement in your child's education is critical to his or her success. To be the pathfinder, to help your child, you need to know what s/he is learning and when.

The *Curriculum Handbook for Parents* series is your guide to each stage of learning. It is a clear outline of what we expect our students to learn at each stage of their education. When you know what is expected at school, you can provide the home support students need. By reading about what your student is learning at school and discussing it at home, you do more than learn what is happening at school. You show your child that you value education.

This is the second edition of the handbook series. It reflects suggestions of parents, teachers and other education partners. I would like to thank those people whose comments helped us improve this edition.

I also would like to thank the eight school boards who worked on the development of the original handbooks – Edmonton Public, Edmonton Separate, Elk Island, Sturgeon, St. Albert Protestant, Greater St. Albert Catholic, Sherwood Park Separate and Black Gold.

Gary G. Mar, Q.C.
Minister of Education
M.L.A., Calgary Nose Creek

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Dear Parents and Guardians:

On behalf of the Catholic Bishops of Alberta, I welcome this opportunity to affirm you in your role as parents in the education of your children and wish to express my appreciation to the Government of Alberta and Alberta Education for this 'Curriculum Handbook for Parents'.

The Church has always recognized with confidence that you, parents, are the first and primary educators of your children, especially with regards to education in the faith. This is a noble, yet, challenging calling that is rightfully yours. Today, therefore, because of the many diverse pressures and influences on our children, your role is vital in working with our schools to continue to provide the best possible education for our children. To those of you who have entrusted your children to a Catholic school, be assured that it is with great respect for these facts that we support you in your role. I encourage you to work closely with our Catholic schools by joining your local school councils or parent groups. Be a strong voice for the Catholic identity of schools. In this regard, you will share in a concrete and invaluable way in the central mission of the Church which is to proclaim Jesus and his Gospel in the world today and, in so doing, hand on our faith to our children.

I commend Alberta Education for providing parents with this practical Curriculum Handbook. It is a clear presentation of what parents can expect of our Alberta schools (Public and Catholic), and by its very existence also acknowledges how important you are as parents in your children's education. In it, you will find a comprehensive presentation of the content and expectations of the Religious Education Program written and approved by the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops. It reflects the essential character of Catholic schools as communities of learning where as an old friend wrote, "... God, God's truth and God's life are integrated into the entire syllabus, curriculum and life of the school."

Let us continue to grow together into Christ.

J. N. MacNeil
Archbishop of Edmonton
President, Alberta Bishops' Conference

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Introduction to the Grade 6 Handbook

This handbook provides parents with information about the Grade 6 curriculum—the knowledge, skills and attitudes students in Alberta are expected to demonstrate when they have completed the Grade 6 curriculum. It is based on the Alberta Education *Program of Studies: Elementary Schools.* The handbook includes samples of what students are expected to learn in each subject. The complete curriculum for Grade 6 is available in all Alberta elementary schools.

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Introduction

TO THE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL CURRICULUM

Alberta Education specifies what all students in Grade 1 to Grade 6 are expected to learn and be able to do. The curriculum is organized into separate subjects or course areas and is designed to enable teachers to make connections across subjects, and to develop programming that accommodates a range of student needs. We expect that teaching methods and schedules will vary from school to school and from class to class to meet the diverse learning needs of students.

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What Is Curriculum?

Curriculum describes what students are expected to learn. In Alberta, curriculum is developed by Alberta Education and is described in documents called programs of study for elementary, junior high and senior high schools.

The curriculum specifies what all students in the province are expected to learn in each subject area at each grade level. It is developed by Alberta Education in consultation with teachers, administrators, parents, representatives from post-secondary institutions, and professional and community groups.

Within the context of Catholic schools, the curriculum in all of its aspects—content, the teaching process, and the total school environment—reflects the values of faith, hope, charity, forgiveness and justice as found in the gospels and the message of Jesus Christ as understood by the Catholic Church.

Teachers are responsible for using the curriculum to plan their teaching activities and set appropriate levels of challenge according to students' learning needs and abilities. Teachers regularly assess student progress and report to parents, students and school administrators.

As well as being assessed by their teachers, students write provincial achievement tests in grades 3, 6 and 9. Grade 3 students write achievement tests in language arts and mathematics. Grades 6 and 9 students write achievement tests in language arts, social studies, mathematics and science. The results of these achievement tests are provided to school boards and schools. Parents may ask for their child's test results at their local school.

Information about provincial achievement testing in grades 3, 6 and 9 is provided in an Alberta Education publication called, *Parent Guide to Provincial Achievement Testing.* Individual guides for Grade 3 and for Grade 6 are available in elementary schools. The Grade 9 guide is available in junior high schools. The publications also may be obtained from Alberta Education's Student Evaluation Branch by calling 403–427–0010 or, outside of Edmonton, dial 310–0000 to be connected toll free.

In Catholic schools there are many opportunities for integrating gospel values and nurturing the presence of God in our midst within the curriculum. Teachers will determine where religious education and church teaching can be integrated with other subjects.

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Religious Education

Religious education is an essential and integral part of the life and culture of a Catholic school. Through it, students are invited to develop the knowledge, beliefs, skills, values and attitudes needed to build a relationship with God and community through the person of Jesus Christ. Religious education shares the same goals and objectives set forth for all good education, that is, the growth and development of the whole person in all his or her dimensions—physical, intellectual, emotional, social and spiritual.

Religious education has four essential characteristics.

It is **Trinitarian**. It recognizes God as the creator of all things who gives us Jesus. It is Jesus who reveals God to us, and in turn reveals God's Spirit, through whom we understand our faith.

It is based on **Sacred Scripture** through which we hear the mystery of God revealed, the call to be in relationship with God and each other, and we learn how to pray.

It is based on the **life experience** of the students through which they are invited to discern signs of God in their daily lives.

It is presented within the tradition of the **Catholic faith community** which, based on Church teachings, sacramental and liturgical life, provides students with experiences of faith, prayer, love and justice.

With an awareness of the uniqueness of each student and a recognition that religious development takes place through a process of stages and within a community, it is expected that program presentation will vary from place to place to meet the diverse learning and religious formation needs of all students.

Religious Education Programs for elementary and junior high schools are authorized by the Bishop of the local diocese. Some school districts have developed supplementary resources and adapted the program to better meet local needs.

The Grade 6 Religious Education Program leads the students to learn and to experience that they are created in God's image and are loved uniquely. It also aims to show them, through scripture, that Jesus and His Spirit help them to make choices and act responsibly toward creation and each other as they strive to bring about God's reign of love, peace and justice at home, at school, in the community and in the world.

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Students explore these themes through the study of 10 units:

Unit 1. "God believes in me!"

The students explore God's image as revealed in Jesus and reflected in all humanity. They are invited to recognize their own giftedness and diversity and to use their gifts in service of others.

Unit 2. "God believes I can choose life."

The students discover that life is a process of making choices and that our choices have consequences that lead to growth. They discover God as one who is always faithful to us. The students learn the fruits of the Spirit and see Jesus as a model of forgiveness. They consider how love can change one's life.

Unit 3. "God believes I can do justice."

The students are invited to recall their baptism into the Christian community. Each person is called to stewardship, to promoting the Kingdom of God by acting out of justice and mercy. The students learn that the Lord's prayer is a prayer for justice and mercy.

Unit 4. God becomes flesh in me.

The students look at Advent, Christmas and Epiphany through people of the Old Testament, Mary and early Christian believers. They hear the challenge of bringing Christ to the world.

Unit 5. Jesus' mission.

The students deepen their understanding that Jesus' mission is to proclaim God's reign. Through healing stories and parables they see how Jesus changed people's lives.

Unit 6. I can be an agent of God's reign.

The students explore how all people can participate in God's reign. They are called to act on behalf of God's Kingdom. The students learn the Beatitudes and how to recognize them in their lives. They discover that celebration is an aspect of the reign of God.

Unit 7. God blesses me as I journey to Easter.

The students explore the RCIA journey and traditional Lenten practices. They are invited to reflect on conversion, on responding to the call to change and to recognize that change promotes growth. In community, the students celebrate reconciliation.

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Unit 8. God is with me in death.

The students examine Jesus' unfailing relationship with his disciples and his promise to be with us. Through the events of Holy Week they explore Jesus' sense of abandonment and betrayal and witness that God does not abandon Jesus even in death. They learn the qualities of a disciple and pray the 'sign of the cross'.

Unit 9. A people born of the Spirit.

The students explore the activity of the Holy Spirit in our lives, in the church and in the world. They also examine how the Holy Spirit is at work in other religious traditions. Through stories, they explore what it is to be a 'saint'.

Unit 10. God knows the world has a future.

The students discover and discuss how they bring hope to the world by their lives and actions, and by using their gifts for the sake of others. They celebrate the fact that "God believes in me!"

Through the partnership of home, school and parish the students also prepare for the Sacrament of Confirmation. In many parishes, as part of their preparation, the students are invited to experience a day of retreat.

The school, through the Religious Education Program, complements parents in their role as primary and principal educators of their children. Home and family play a vitally important role in the faith development of children. Within the family, seeds of faith are planted. Family relationships and daily experiences are major factors in shaping a child's values, attitudes and Catholic identity. Regular religious practice and the application of classroom learning to daily life are critical parts of religious formation.

Prayer is an integral part of the Religious Education Program and of each school day since intimacy with God is the ultimate goal of Catechesis. Respecting the individual differences of children and our changing human needs, prayer is experienced in many different ways: silent reflection, guided imagery, scriptural prayer, song and formal community prayer. As we enter into prayer, we give praise and thanks for God's loving presence and call upon the Spirit to guide, nourish and empower our lives through Jesus Christ.

Teaching the sacraments occurs within each of the Religious Education Programs. Sacraments celebrate the presence of Christ in our lives. They are effective signs that make God's grace present to us in love, healing and the transformation of our lives. Eucharist and Reconciliation are an essential part of each child's religious formation and a necessary grounding for a mature faith. As with many basic themes, Eucharist and Reconciliation are introduced in Grade 1, but continue to be deepened and intensified in each year thereafter. Children who have not yet celebrated First Communion or First Reconciliation are always welcome to contact their parish to begin their immediate preparation for the sacraments.

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The Religious Education Program interprets for the students what the Catechism of the Catholic Church teaches about our faith in a manner appropriate to the age and development of the students. Not everything in the Catechism is incorporated because, as the Catechism itself points out, what is taught must be adapted to the "differences of culture, age, spiritual maturity, and social and ecclesial conditions among all those to whom it is addressed" (#24). Specific excerpts are quoted at the end of each theme for the teacher to help root the contents and activities of the theme in Church tradition.

The Religious Education Program is structured around the church liturgical year. This enables students to live and express faith in an integrated way at school, at home and in the parish community.

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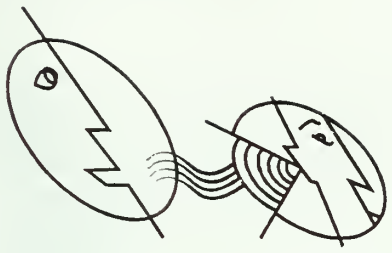
Language Arts



Throughout elementary school, students are expected to use language to learn, and learn to use language. Language is an integral part of learning, and takes place in and across all subject areas. Student performance in all subject areas is influenced by competency in language arts.

As students move from grade to grade, they use the language skills they have already learned through reading, writing, listening, speaking and viewing to increase their knowledge and skills of language. Opportunities are provided for students to use those skills in a new context and with more challenging learning materials. In language arts, students will demonstrate increasing confidence and improve their abilities to use language to explore, construct and communicate meaning.

In a Catholic school, students are invited to consider how the knowledge, skills and values studied within the language arts curriculum are integrated with other subject areas, including religious education, and reflect the Catholic identity of the school.

By the end of Grade 6, students are expected to:

- revise their initial writing drafts
- use a variety of sentence structures
- refine and polish word choices
- use conventional formats for letters
- use their experience with figures of speech, such as metaphor and personification to assist them in their reading, writing and talking
- recognize how point-of-view influences communication; for example, that of their own, that of a speaker's or a writer's
- identify a writer's or speaker's underlying theme
- determine the mood developed by a speaker or writer
- select and write on topics of interest
- use semicolons and quotation marks
- identify the meanings of prefixes that have consistent meaning; for example, re-, non-, un- and pre-
- recognize common phrases as idiomatic expressions
- understand that languages are constantly changing and adapting
- distinguish fact from opinion; relevant information from irrelevant information
- recognize techniques used by writers and speakers to create humour
- focus their talk or writing on ideas related to topics or themes, and provide support for their ideas
- express personal viewpoints that may be contrary to popular opinion
- create a table of contents
- develop a logically supported argument for formal presentation
- compose stories that contain elements of story structure; for example: setting, problem/conflict, main characters, resolution or conclusion.

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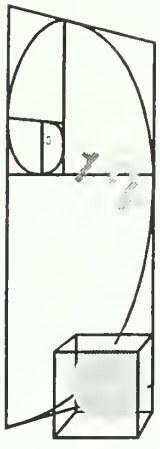
Mathematics



Mathematics is a common human activity, increasing in importance in a rapidly advancing, technological society. A greater proficiency in using mathematics increases the opportunities available to individuals. Students need to become mathematically literate in order to explore problem-solving situations.

At all levels, students benefit from working with appropriate materials, tools and contexts when constructing personal meaning about new mathematical ideas.

The main goals of mathematics education are to prepare students to:

- use mathematics confidently to solve problems
- communicate and reason mathematically
- appreciate and value mathematics
- commit themselves to lifelong learning
- become mathematically literate adults, using mathematics to contribute to society.

As students acquire the specified outcomes, they will also be expected to use the following seven mathematical processes:

Communication
Connections
Estimation and Mental Mathematics
Problem Solving
Reasoning
Technology
Visualization.

The mathematics content is organized into four strands:

Number
Patterns and Relations
Shape and Space
Statistics and Probability.

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Number

By the end of Grade 6, students will:

- Develop a number sense for decimals and common fractions, explore integers, and show number sense for whole numbers.

Sample Student Tasks

- The day after a telethon, the radio reported that about $2.1 million was raised. Explain why the value would be expressed in this way. What may have been the amount raised?
- On a field trip, have students estimate the number of seats in a hockey rink, theatre or stadium. Compare your result to the box office count.
- A certain negative integer is:
  less than –3
  greater than –8
  farther from –8, than –3.
  What is the integer?
  Draw and label a number line to justify your answer. Make up another set of clues about a negative integer.
- What number could be in the thousandths place, if a number rounds to 6.53?

- Apply arithmetic operations on whole numbers and decimals in solving problems.

Sample Student Tasks

- On an average day in Canada, about seventy-two thousand six hundred eighty-five Canadians celebrate their birthdays. About how many people must there be in Canada? Estimate your answer. Check your estimate with a calculator.
- How would you use a calculator to find an estimate for this question?
  About 280 million cans of one brand of pop are sold each day. About how many days does it take to sell enough cans to make a stack that would reach the Moon—385 000 kilometres away? Keep a record of your work, and plan to report your results to the class.

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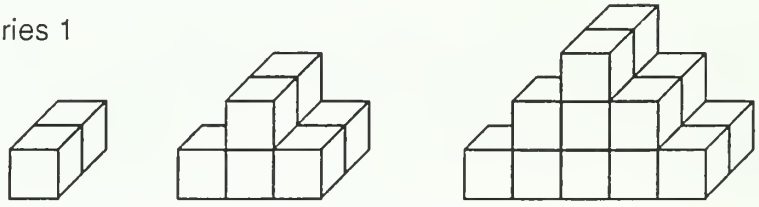
Patterns and Relations

By the end of Grade 6, students will:

- Use relationships to summarize, generalize and extend patterns, including those found in music and art.

Sample Student Tasks

- Series 1



  Provide a written description of how to build the fourth model in the series. Include a drawing. Then describe any patterns that can be seen in the models.
  Chart the number of cubes needed to build the first five models.
  Graph the relationship between the number of the model and the number of cubes needed to construct each. Use your graph to predict the number of cubes needed to build the 6th model.

- Use informal and concrete representations of equality and operations on equality to solve problems.

Sample Student Tasks

- Fill in the missing number(s) in each equation. Choose two and explain how you know your answer is correct.
  $7 + \square = 9 + 4$
  $16 - 7 = 3 + \Delta$
  $\Delta \times 6 = 60 \div 2$
  $2 \times (3 + 5) = \square - 4$
  $\Delta + (3 \times 6) = \Delta + \Delta + 15$

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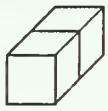
Shape and Space

By the end of Grade 6, students will:

- Solve problems involving perimeter, area, surface area, volume and angle measurement.

Sample Student Tasks

- Use unit cubes to build the objects shown in the following chart. Complete the chart.

Figure	Perimeter of Top	Area of Top	Surface Area	Volume
each dimension doubled 				
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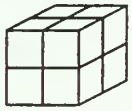
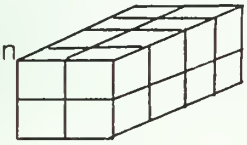
				
each dimension doubled 				
each dimension tripled				

- You are building a run in the backyard for your dog. You have 24 m of fence wire and you want the run to be the shape of a rectangle.

  Make at least two drawings of rectangles that you could use that would require all the fencing. Explain which one you would choose to build, and why.

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◆ Use visualization and symmetry to solve problems involving classification and sketching.

Sample Student Tasks

- A single serving cereal box is 9 cm wide, 3 cm deep and 12 cm high. Use grid paper to draw a picture of the box. A larger box of the same cereal is three times as wide, deep and tall. Draw the box to actual scale on a large, plain sheet of paper.

◆ Create patterns and designs that incorporate symmetry, tessellations, translations and reflections.

Sample Student Tasks

- Plot these points on a coordinate grid.
  A (1, 5) *D* (6, 3)
  B (1, 3) *E* (6, 1)
  C (2, 3) *F* (5, 1)
  Describe what combination of translations, rotation and/or reflections would move triangle *ABC* to the position of triangle *DEF*.
  Make up a problem with quadrilaterals in place of triangles.

Statistics and Probability

By the end of Grade 6, students will:

◆ Develop and implement a plan for the collection, display and analysis of data gathered from appropriate samples.

Sample Student Tasks

- You will often find a relationship between two different body measurements, such as the circumference of a person's head to his or her height.

  What are some key questions you might form to guide your investigation of body relationships? Can you predict what conclusion might be expected for each?
  Write and carry out a plan for investigating one of your questions above. Include information on the following:
  sources of your data
  sample size and makeup
  method of data collection.
  Find two different but satisfactory ways to display your data so any relationships between body measurements are revealed.
  Draw conclusions about your investigation, and compare them to your predictions.

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- A Grade 6 class measured their heights to the nearest centimetre.

137	115	153	179	164	143	170
142	129	157	153	128	161	149
139	164	121	138	161	119	140
137	157	136	126	149	143	149

  What are the least and greatest heights? What chart or graph would best reveal the two numbers?
  What height occurred more often than any other height? What chart or graph would best reveal this number?
  What height represents the middle of all the heights? How do you know? What chart or graph best reveals this?

◆ Use numbers to communicate the probability of single events from experiments and models.

Sample Student Tasks

- You have a cube with faces numbered 1 to 6.
  What is the theoretical probability of rolling: a 6? A 4? A 1?
  Perform an experiment with a die and compare the results.

Science

Learning about science helps students to understand and interpret the world around them. The purpose of the program is to encourage and stimulate children's learning by nurturing their sense of wonderment, by developing skill and confidence in investigating their surroundings, and by building a foundation of experience and understanding upon which later learning can be based.

In elementary science, students develop their skills of inquiry and problem solving. In science inquiry, the focus is on asking questions, exploring materials and finding answers based on evidence. In problem solving, the focus is on practical tasks—finding ways of making and doing things to meet a specific need, using available materials.

In a Catholic school, students are invited to consider how issues of stewardship, morals, ethics and Catholic teaching can be integrated appropriately into the science curriculum.

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By the end of Grade 6, students are expected to:

- design and carry out an investigation of a practical problem, and develop a possible solution
- recognize the importance of accuracy in observation and measurement
- apply suitable methods to record, compile, interpret and evaluate observations and measurements.

The science program also plays a role in the development of student attitudes. At all levels of the elementary science program, students are expected to demonstrate positive attitudes toward the study of science and the application of science in responsible ways.

Five topics are identified for Grade 6.

Air and Aerodynamics

Students explore the characteristics of air and the interaction between moving air and solids. They learn that air is a compressible fluid, that it is composed of many gases, and that moving air can support solid materials in sustained flight. By studying birds and airplanes, they learn a variety of adaptations and designs that make flight possible and that provide for propulsion and control.

By the end of Grade 6, students are expected to:

- describe the properties of air and the interactions of air with objects in flight.

Flight

Students apply their knowledge of aerodynamics to design, build and test a variety of flying devices. In constructing models, students develop a basic design; then build it, test it, and solve the problems that inevitably arise. Through teamwork, they learn that planning, communication, cooperation and flexibility are important to the overall result, even though parts of a task can be worked on individually.

By the end of Grade 6, students are expected to:

- construct devices that move through air, and identify adaptations for controlling flight.

Sky Science

Students learn about objects in the day and night sky. Through direct observation and research, students learn about the motions and characteristics of stars, moons and planets. Using simple materials, such as balls and beads, students create models and diagrams which they use to explore the relative position and motion of objects in space. As a result of these studies, students move from a simple view of land and sky, to one that recognizes Earth as a sphere in motion within a larger universe. With new understanding, students revisit the topics of seasonal cycles, phases of the Moon and the apparent motion of stars.

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By the end of Grade 6, students are expected to:

- observe, describe and interpret the movement of objects in the sky; and identify pattern and order in these movements.

Evidence and Investigation

Students sharpen their skills in observing and interpreting what they see by investigating evidence of human and animal activity. They explore and analyze indoor and outdoor environments as they look for footprints, markings, evidence of disturbance and things that are left behind. Through these studies, students learn to pose questions, devise investigations, recognize patterns and discrepancies, and think logically about what they have observed.

By the end of Grade 6, students are expected to:

- apply observation and inference skills to recognize and interpret patterns and to distinguish a specific pattern from a group of similar patterns
- apply knowledge of the properties and interactions of materials to the investigation and identification of a material sample.

Trees and Forests

Students learn about trees as individual plants and as part of a forest ecosystem. By examining local species, they learn to recognize the characteristics of different trees and develop skills in describing and interpreting the structural features of trees. As part of their studies, students learn about a broad range of living things found on, under and around trees and study the complex interaction between trees and the larger environment. In examining human use of forests, they become aware of a broad range of environmental issues and develop an awareness of the need for responsible use.

By the end of Grade 6, students are expected to:

- describe characteristics of trees and the interaction of trees with other living things in the local environment.

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Social Studies

In social studies, students develop the knowledge, skills and positive attitudes they need to be responsible citizens and contributing members of society. Students learn to acquire and evaluate information and ideas. They learn to interact with others and develop understanding and respect for people in Canada and other countries. The focus of the Grade 6 social studies program is meeting human needs. Students learn about how needs are met by the local, provincial and federal governments; how the government of an ancient civilization met the needs of its citizens; and how China—one of Canada's Pacific Rim neighbours—meets its citizens' needs.

In a Catholic school, students are invited to consider how issues of social justice, the contribution of the Church to community (locally and globally), and Church teaching can be integrated appropriately into the social studies curriculum.

Three topics are identified for Grade 6.

Local Government

Students learn about the involvement of the individual at different levels of government and develop an awareness of needs met by the local, provincial and federal governments. Emphasis is placed on local government and on the rights of citizens and their responsibilities to others when exercising those rights.

By the end of Grade 6, students are expected to:

- understand that an individual has responsibilities and rights as a citizen that begin at the local level
- develop an understanding of the three levels of government
- understand how people organize to meet needs not met by government
- understand how governments raise money to meet needs
- understand the role of lobby groups and how they can influence the decisions of government
- understand that democracy allows people to take part in government and how the election process works at all levels of government
- locate, organize and interpret information gathered from a variety of sources
- locate on a map of Canada boundaries of local, provincial and federal jurisdictions
- compute distances between points on maps of different scales
- analyze how the actions of government can affect people
- participate effectively in groups.

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Greece: An Ancient Civilization

Students learn about how the physical, social and psychological needs of the citizens of ancient Greece were met through decisions made by individuals and groups. The study of an ancient civilization helps students to understand the roots of Western civilization.

By the end of Grade 6, students are expected to:

- understand that the ways in which physical, social and psychological needs are met, and how they have varied over time and from place to place
- know how environment, beliefs and class structure affected how an individual's needs were met in ancient Greece
- understand that Greek values, beliefs and ideas have affected Western civilization, and how they affect us today
- understand latitude and longitude
- select pertinent information from history books, myths, legends, historical maps and historical fiction
- distinguish between fact and fiction
- record information on a timeline.

China: A Pacific Rim Nation

Students learn about how physical, social and psychological needs of people are met in modern China. Emphasis is placed on the similarities and differences in the challenges that citizens of Canada and citizens of China must resolve in meeting their needs. Students develop an awareness of Chinese culture.

By the end of Grade 6, students are expected to:

- understand that nations in the world are becoming increasingly interdependent
- know that the Pacific Rim is becoming increasingly important
- understand that changes in the way China meets basic needs have been accelerated by communications and technology
- understand that lifestyle is influenced by sharing among countries
- use an atlas to locate places in China and Canada
- infer relationships from data shown on maps
- compare and contrast the way people in China and Canada meet their needs
- express opinions about aspects of Chinese society.

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Learner Outcomes in Technology

Alberta Education has prepared a framework of technology outcomes that students should achieve by the end of grades 3, 6, 9 and 12. Implementation of the technology outcomes will occur in September 2000. These outcomes are intended to be integrated in a variety of existing programs, such as English, mathematics, science and social studies. The information and communication technology outcomes that have been developed are considered basic knowledge and skills that all students will need as they progress through their schooling and in the future for preparation for further study or the workplace.

Physical Education

Physical education programs foster active, healthy lifestyles that enable students to recognize the importance of accepting responsibility for their physical, social and emotional well-being. Students in a well-balanced physical education program are provided with learning opportunities in seven dimensions of activity: physical fitness, games, gymnastics, dance, outdoor pursuits, aquatics, and track and field. The expectations for physical education are generally the same for students in grades 4, 5 and 6. Students are expected to demonstrate increased levels of performance over the three years.

Physical Fitness

Students are expected to:

- understand the effects of exercise on major muscles, bones and joints
- assess personal fitness levels
- experience success and enjoyment through participation in physical fitness activities.

Games

Students are expected to:

- move into spaces to avoid others
- understand the difference between offence and defence
- cooperate in partner and small group situations.

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Gymnastics

Students are expected to:

- understand safety principles as they apply to gymnastic activity
- appreciate the performance of self and others.

Dance

Students are expected to:

- participate in a variety of rhythmic dance forms
- understand personal space and general space
- appreciate the aesthetics of dance.

Outdoor Pursuits

Students are expected to:

- apply and extend basic movement skills in outdoor pursuits
- understand applications of orienteering skills, such as using a compass to determine directions
- enjoy participation in outdoor games that require minimal organization.

Aquatics

Students are expected to:

- improve physical fitness through vigorous aquatic activities
- understand safety principles as they apply to activities in, on or near water.

At least one exposure to a swimming and water safety program is required during the elementary years.

Track and Field

Students are expected to:

- throw small objects for distance
- understand the basic techniques applied to running, jumping and throwing events
- demonstrate responsibility and cooperation through involvement in the track and field program.

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Health

Health education fosters the growth of knowledge, skills, attitudes and lifelong behaviours that will enable the student to assume responsibility for healthful living and personal well-being. The curriculum is organized around themes: self-awareness and acceptance, relating to others, life careers, body knowledge and care, and human sexuality. Parents decide if their child will participate in classes about human sexuality.

In a Catholic school, these themes are taught within the context of the teachings of the Catholic Church. The local boards of many Catholic school districts have approved supplementary resources and adapted the curriculum to better meet the needs of their students, their families and their faith communities.

The child abuse prevention unit is an optional part of the health program. If this unit is offered in the school, parents decide if their child will participate.

Self-awareness and Acceptance

Students learn to consider and appreciate their self-worth and the self-worth of others. They learn about human emotions and positive ways of expressing them. They also learn about personal characteristics and how their personal actions and decisions influence their relationships with others.

By the end of Grade 6, students are expected to:

- formulate personal goals
- be aware of feelings and be able to express them
- understand inherited and acquired traits
- understand game playing; for example, games people play to attract friends.

Relating to Others

Students learn to appreciate the qualities of others. They learn how to develop and maintain healthful relationships and they understand the importance of healthful relationships with others at school.

By the end of Grade 6, students are expected to:

- develop skills that promote open, genuine relationships
- develop responsibility for own behaviour.

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Life Careers

Students learn to recognize their abilities and the abilities of others, and to understand the importance of work, occupations associated with work, and activities that help them prepare for work.

By the end of Grade 6, students are expected to:

- develop personal awareness
- understand nontraditional roles
- relate school habits and the world of work.

Body Knowledge and Care

Students understand the structure, function and development of the body, and appreciate the importance of good nutrition to good health. As well, students appreciate factors that contribute to healthful growth, understand how sickness and disease can be prevented, understand safety practices, and appreciate threats and aids to personal health and safety in their community.

By the end of Grade 6, students are expected to:

- understand stages of development
- understand nutrients in food
- understand the benefits of fitness
- be aware of alternatives to drugs
- know how to conduct a home safety assessment.

Human Sexuality

Students are expected to understand the structure and function of the reproductive system, and to understand puberty and its associated changes. As well, they are expected to understand how human life is created. This unit is addressed within the context of Catholic teaching.

By the end of Grade 6, students are expected to:

- understand physical and emotional changes in puberty
- know vocabulary describing reproduction.

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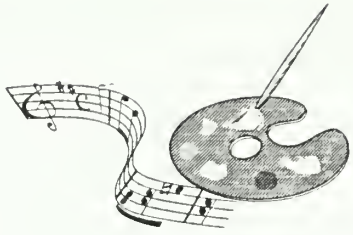
Fine Arts



In a Catholic school, students are invited to consider how the knowledge, skills and values studied within the fine arts curriculum can be used to understand the religious dimensions of art, liturgy, music and history. They are also used directly to enhance the religious and spiritual culture of the school, and to celebrate the various liturgical feasts of the year.

Art

In the art program, students are expected to learn visual arts skills and concepts to interpret and communicate with visual symbols, to appreciate the cultural aspects of art, and to relate art to everyday life. The art curriculum has four major components:

reflection – responding to visual forms in nature and designed objects
depiction – developing imagery based on observations of the visual world
composition – organizing images and their qualities in the creation of works of art
expression – using art materials to make a meaningful statement.

Students are expected to:

- analyze forms they see in nature and in man-made objects
- develop their own images of things that they see or imagine
- organize the images that they create
- use a variety of art materials
- use art for different purposes; for example, to illustrate stories, design fabrics and sculpt
- understand the contribution of art to our environment.

Drama

Drama is an optional program designed to be used as a separate subject or integrated with other subjects. In the drama program, students are expected to develop a positive self-concept by assuming other roles and acquiring dramatic skills. Eleven forms of dramatic expression are common components of an elementary drama program. The dramatic forms of expression include dramatic movement, mime, choral speech, storytelling, dramatization, puppetry, choric drama, readers' theatre, story theatre, playmaking and group drama.

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Students are expected to:

- develop flexible, free and controlled movement
- learn to express themselves physically and imaginatively through movement and gesture
- recognize and reproduce the sounds of standard speech
- learn concepts of pitch, pace, pause, rate, intensity and volume
- accept role playing as a positive learning experience
- apply dramatization skills to puppetry by creating a character for a puppet
- speak with energy
- speak with an appreciation of the voice as an instrument
- develop appreciation for enjoyment of literature
- develop the ability to create a dramatic story
- cooperatively build a drama to solve problems.

Music

In the music program, students are expected to develop: an enjoyment of music, an understanding of a variety of music styles and an insight into music through meaningful musical activities, such as attending a concert or playing a musical instrument, and learning musical skills or knowledge about music. The music program is developed around the concepts of rhythm, melody, harmony, form and expression. These concepts are learned through participating in six skill areas: listening, moving, singing, playing instruments, reading and writing, and creating.

By the end of Grade 6, students are expected to:

- identify musical instruments, major and minor chords, different voices and the music of different composers
- move to various musical forms, show changes in tempo, perform simple folk dances, and plan body movements to illustrate rhythms and melodies
- sing in tune, and sing folk, ethnic and seasonal songs
- sing rounds, descants and two-part songs
- play simple rhythms and accompaniments, and demonstrate skill on several instruments
- identify notes and rests
- recognize musical notation and write rhythmic patterns
- create movements to demonstrate different forms of music, and create rhythms and melodies for poems and songs.

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Languages Other Than English

French as a Second Language

In Alberta, French as a Second Language (FSL) is a program in which the French language is taught as a subject, often between 20 and 40 minutes a day, to help students develop communication skills, language knowledge and cultural awareness in French.

Depending upon a school board's language policy, French as a Second Language in elementary schools may be offered as an optional program or it may be a compulsory program. School boards may begin the program at different grade levels, since the program is based on developing language proficiency over a grade or grades without being grade specific. Many schools start the elementary program in Grade 4.

The program is designed to teach students how to understand what they hear and read in French, and to communicate their ideas orally and in written form, using an approach that is based on real-life experiences and situations. Students will also acquire knowledge about local, provincial and national francophone groups to become more aware of their presence and to better understand them. Students learn the French language vocabulary and grammar through thematic activities and projects that are related to real-life language experiences. At the same time, students are taught specific language learning strategies that will help them become better second language learners.

The program is organized into three language proficiency levels—Beginning, Intermediate and Advanced. Each of these proficiency levels is then further divided into three sublevels. In elementary schools, students start at the Beginning Level and progress through the Beginning 1, Beginning 2 and Beginning 3 sublevels. It could take students one or more school years to reach a particular language proficiency level, depending upon when the students start the program and how much time is given to French instruction in the school.

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The language content is based upon the concrete experiences of elementary students. These experiences provide a real-life context for understanding ideas in French and for communicating similar ideas. Each level has its own set of experiences that fall into the following areas:

Beginning 1

- School
- People Around Us
- Weather
- Animals
- Holidays and Celebrations

Beginning 2

- Community
- Clothing
- Exercise
- Food
- Housing

Beginning 3

- Activities
- Vacations
- Fine Arts
- Trades and Professions
- Hygiene and Safety

As students work through these experiences, they develop their ability to understand and communicate in French. At the end of each level, the students must demonstrate the following knowledge and skills:

Beginning 1

The ability to understand simple ideas contained in listening texts, such as the temperature in a weather forecast.

The ability to talk about concrete ideas, using simple sentences to identify, list or describe people, places or things, and to ask simple questions. For example, students could talk about their family by naming the members of the family, giving their ages and birthdays.

Beginning 2

The ability to understand simple ideas contained in listening texts, such as understanding directions to the corner store, and to understand simple reading texts, such as understanding the main food items on a menu.

The ability to talk and write about concrete ideas, using simple sentences to identify, list or describe people, places or things, and to ask simple questions. For example, students could provide their address, telephone number and order pizza over the telephone. They could also write a simple note to describe their house to a pen pal.

Beginning 3

The ability to understand simple ideas contained in listening texts, such as a recorded message of flight departure times, and to understand simple reading texts, such as the safety rules on a safety week poster.

The ability to talk and write about concrete ideas, using a number of simple sentences to identify, list or describe people, places or things, ask simple questions, give information and simple advice. For example, students could telephone a travel agency to ask for prices for different travel destinations. They could also write a simple announcement for the school's Night of Music concert to promote it in the community.

Once students have attained a Beginning Level 3 language proficiency, they then move into the next proficiency level, which is Intermediate Level 4.

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French Immersion

French immersion is a program in which French is the language of instruction for a significant part of the school day. This program is designed for students whose first language is not French. Several subjects, or possibly all of them when students are in grades 1 and 2, are taught in French. The curriculum is identical to that offered in the regular English program. The major difference is that it is taught in French.

In addition to learning what is identified for courses such as mathematics, science and health, French immersion students also want to acquire full mastery of the English language, functional fluency in French, as well as an understanding and appreciation of the French culture. Graduates of a French immersion program are able and willing to participate with confidence and competence in French conversations on a variety of topics. Should they so wish, they are able to take further education as appropriate to their abilities and interests with French as the language of instruction. Finally, they are able to accept employment where French is the language of work.

French immersion students perform well in all subject areas on system-wide and provincial tests. This finding has been replicated many times not only in Alberta but across Canada.

A guide for parents of students in French Immersion, *Yes, You Can Help*, is available for purchase from the Learning Resources Distributing Centre at 403–427–2767 or, outside of Edmonton, dial 310–0000 to be connected toll free.

Native Languages

Blackfoot and Cree language and culture programs are designed to enable students to learn Native languages and to increase awareness of Native cultures.

Students are expected to:

- learn basic communication skills in Blackfoot or Cree
- develop cultural sensitivity and enhance personal development
- develop originality and creativity
- develop a desire to improve their competency in Blackfoot or Cree.

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Ukrainian

The Ukrainian bilingual program is designed for native speakers of Ukrainian and for students who speak other languages and wish to learn Ukrainian.

Students are expected to:

- obtain specific information from teacher-selected sources
- recognize how to express personal feelings, ideas and opinions
- organize and present, effectively, information of interest to their peers
- share feelings; share and support ideas and opinions
- respond personally to a variety of literary forms
- use literature and other art forms to reflect creatively upon experiences of general interest
- recognize and be sensitive to differences or similarities in cultures
- recognize the contribution of the lifestyle of Ukrainians to the wider community.

In a Catholic school, both within the Religious Education Program and along with the study of the Ukrainian language, many aspects of the life and faith of the Ukrainian Catholic Church are studied and celebrated.

Other Languages

Locally developed language courses are available for Arabic, Cantonese, German, Hebrew, Mandarin, Polish and Spanish. Contact your school board office for information about which language programs it offers.

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Feedback

Curriculum Handbook for Parents: Catholic School Version

Grade 6

We would like to know what you think about this handbook. Are you a:

_____ Parent

_____ Teacher (please indicate level) ____ Division 1, ____ Division 2, ____ Division 3

_____ School Administrator (please indicate level) ____ Division 1, ____ Division 2, ____ Division 3

_____ District Administrator

_____ Other (please specify) _____

1. I found this document:

   _____ extremely useful

   _____ useful

   _____ somewhat useful

   _____ not very useful.

2. What could be done to make this document more useful?

   _____

   _____

3. Other comments and suggestions:

   _____

   _____

   _____

Thank you for your feedback.

Please send your response to:

Director, Curriculum Standards Branch
Alberta Education
11160 Jasper Avenue
Edmonton, Alberta, Canada
T5K 0L2
Fax: 403–422–3745

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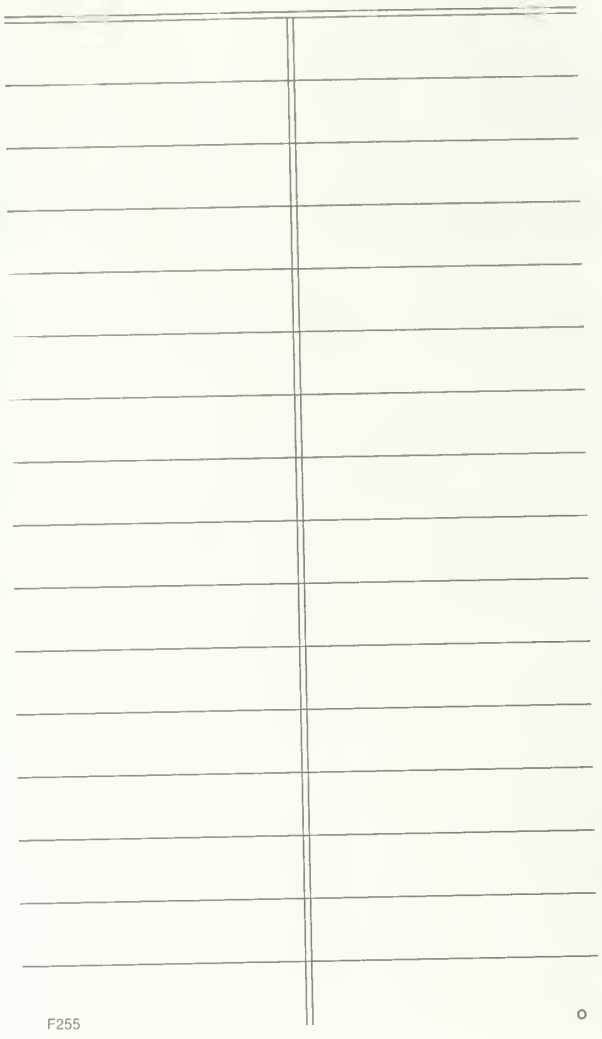

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